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SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: U.S./CHINA DIALOG ON AFRICA

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¶1. Since 1994, the GOTG has maintained diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and The Gambia's relationship with Mainland China is confined to the economic arena. Despite the lack of official ties, Mainland China's exports to The Gambia have grown tremendously in recent years -- 523 percent between 2002 and 2004. As of 2004, Mainland China was The Gambia's second largest trading partner, exporting dols 40 million worth of goods to this country. We believe that Mainland China's exports to The Gambia are continuing to increase. Mainland China's imports from The Gambia are minimal, valued at a little over dols 500,000 in 2004.

¶2. The main imports from China are foodstuffs, textiles, footwear, chemicals, machinery, and electronics. Exports consist primarily of groundnut oil. Exports of minerals, metals, and lumber are virtually non-existent. The Gambia has no domestic oil production.

¶3. Following the severing of official ties in 1994, we are aware of only one Mainland Chinese company continuing to operate here, the Guangxi International Construction Engineering Corporation Ltd. (GIGEC). While this firm was involved in various major construction projects here prior to 1994, we are not aware of its currently implementing any such projects here. However, the firm doubtless serves as a conduit for the ever-growing volume of Mainland Chinese exports to The Gambia.

STAFFORD